



# City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

## Seattle Human Rights Commission

Lubna Mahadeen, Chair

Seattle City Council  
600 Fourth Avenue  
PO Box 34025  
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

October 21, 2008

Re: City's Budget to End Homelessness

Dear Seattle City Council Members:

The Seattle Human Rights Commission (SHRC) recognizes the City's efforts in ending homelessness and supports the Mayor's 2009-2010 budget recommendations in funding Housing First units, shelters and supporting services to homeless individuals and families.

The demand for shelters has increased in the last year and more individuals are finding themselves on the streets. There are more people who need and want shelter every night than there are places for them indoors. We understand that the crisis of homelessness is a national one, and that the rest of King County and Washington State, as well as the federal government, must share in creating solutions to end homelessness. The City of Seattle plays a critical role in ensuring that people feel secure in their own community by providing safe shelters as a basic human right. Because there are people on the streets of this city, we all must respond to the problem. This is a matter of human decency and human rights for homeless individuals.

The Seattle Human Rights Commission's "Ending Homelessness Taskforce" supports recommendations presented to City Council from the Seattle Human Services Coalition (SHSC), and the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH) that request:

- Increased funding for emergency response shelters and interim housing by \$50,000, which will ensure services to more homeless individuals;
- Increased emergency motel vouchers to \$260,000, which will provide safe shelters to more families experiencing homelessness during the night;
- The addition of 50 beds for youth and young adults that will total around \$500,000;
- Making shelters available to any person without shelter, not only to those who are targeted by City or State sweeps;
- Additional support for day-time services for those who are homeless.

We hope that the Council will approve these recommendations. Thank you for your time and consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,

Lubna M. Mahadeen  
Chairperson  
Seattle Human Rights Commission

Cc: Julie Nelson, Director, Seattle Office for Civil Rights  
Jacque Larrainzar, Community Outreach Manager  
Ending Homelessness Taskforce: Marissa Chavez, Lubna Mahadeen, Charles Hodges